

Dear Senator _____ Date _____

I am writing to you because of my concerns regarding the difficulties that have arisen in the shipment of live birds through the US Postal Service. As you may be aware, these issues have also occurred in previous years. Though legislative action has been undertaken, the problems have yet to be corrected. My specific concerns are:

1. The Constitution and the statutes enacted by Congress guarantee that postal patrons receive prompt, reliable, and efficient postal service to all communities at all times. This has not been the case during the 2005 shipping season.
2. Delta Airlines has unilaterally announced to the USPS that it would no longer accept shipments of lives if they require transfers. You may ship from A to B, but not from A to B to C. This combined with the fact that USPS is notified by the airlines of the equipment available on given routes on given days (some equipment cannot carry lives) is causing weekly changes to the zip codes for which a given shipper can guarantee to provide shipment.
3. Airlines have, as in the past, refused shipments of day-old chicks when temperatures reach 85 degrees. Industry and the Department of Agriculture have been clear that this standard should not apply to day-old chicks. Scientific studies, and practical experience, clearly indicate that day-old chicks are readily shipped at temperatures between 85-100 degrees (F).
4. Fed/Ex has taken over the Eagle Service previously run by the USPS. Fed/Ex has taken the legal position that it is not covered by the statute that requires any air carrier to accept, as mail, shipments of day-old poultry and other such live animals as postal regulations allow to be transmitted as mail matter. Fed/Ex's position is that they are exempt because they commonly and regularly refuse to accept animals as cargo. But this is not true. Fed/Ex ships all kinds of animals with the exception of dogs and cats. The USPS has contractually exempted Fed/Ex from shipping lives. This is a failure by the USPS to require Fed/Ex to provide service for which it clearly qualifies, and which service the USPS clearly needs to provide "efficient postal service to all communities at all times."

Many private citizens and businesses, such as chefs, growers of pasture-based poultry, hatcheries, and farmers of breeding stock depend on the ability to ship live poultry. The current situation is causing businesses to close and is interrupting the shipment of stock causing both death and permanent damage to that same stock.

I am requesting that you investigate this issue for yourself and that you support Senator Grassley's (Iowa) efforts to correct this situation. What is needed is a permanent solution to this problem and not just a "band-aid" fix. Thank you.

Sincerely

Sign Name _____

Name (Print) _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____